CLAIMS

1.   A method of controlling access to a communications resource in which the maximum capacity made available to each of a plurality of users bears an inverse
5   relationship to the usage of the resource made by that user over a previous period, relative to the usage made by the other users

2.   A method according to claim 1, comprising the steps of
        -   measuring the usage of the resource made by each user over a
10   predetermined period,
        -   ranking the users according to the measured usage
        -   restricting the availability of resource to each user by applying a restriction factor to each user according to that user's ranking

15 3.   A method according to claim 2, in which the restriction factors allocated to adjacently ranked users differ by a ratio which is constant over all users.

4.   A method according to claim 2 or claim 3, in which the restriction factor allocated to the user having made the least usage over the previous period is unity.
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5.   Apparatus for controlling access to a communications resource having means for allocating capacity to each of a plurality of users in inverse relationship to the usage of the resource made by that user over a previous period, relative to the usage made by the other users.
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6.   Apparatus according to claim 5, having measuring means for the usage of the resource made by each user over a predetermined period,
        sorting means for ranking the users according to the measured usage
        calculation means for calculating a restriction factor for each user according to
30 that user's ranking
        and access control means for making the resource available to each user to an extent determined by the restriction factor

7.   Apparatus according to claim 5 or claim 6, associated with a modem associated with a server controlling access to the internet

8.   Apparatus according to claim 5 or claim 6, associated with a switching system for
5   controlling access to an Internet service provider.